

Indiana House of Representatives

News and Information

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REP. SMITH REJECTS SILVERMAN'S BMV PROPOSAL

INDIANAPOLIS—On behalf of the constituents he represents, State Rep. Vernon G. Smith (D-Gary) rejected a proposal by Bureau of Motor Vehicles (BMV) Commissioner Joel Silverman to close the Gary BMV branch and offer a mini-branch on West Sixth Avenue.

Dr. Smith is recommending to other area lawmakers that they mobilize Gary residents for a march on Indianapolis and a mass demonstration in front of the governor's office if the BMV does not renounce the Gary closure.

Silverman made the announcement Tuesday that he would close the full-service branch and offer services through a facility operated by Edgewater Systems for Balanced Living, Inc.

"This is ridiculous and totally inadequate," said Dr. Smith. "Silverman is offering two employees and a computer to take care of the needs of the fifth largest city in Indiana. That is an insult."

Gary officials had offered a compromise proposal to Silverman that would have kept Gary's BMV services in a centralized location. Smith said the proposal was ignored.

"Silverman closed the Gary BMV branch without any effort to work out a compromise with our local officials," said Dr. Smith. "Silverman promised during the hearing to work with us to find a way to ensure that branch services would be maintained. Then we hear nothing from him until he announced the closure. Commissioner Silverman doesn't seem to listen very well, which I believe comes from his insensitivity to the needs of our community. He sincerely has no interpersonal skills and his arrogance translates into poor service for Hoosiers throughout the state.

"Silverman and the Daniels' administration need to learn that government is not total business," Dr. Smith added. "Much of government boils down to service to its citizens. It is unfair and unwise to cut dollars when it makes no sense. We taxpayers pay Silverman's high salary so he can provide the best service possible, not to deprive critical government services to one of the largest cities in Indiana. This is an outrage. Our citizens need to make their voices loud and clear so Governor Daniels and Commissioner Silverman can hear our concerns and anger all the way down in Indianapolis."

